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The Impact of Videos in Efl Classroom

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to investigate the impact that videos played during EFL classes as well as the learners' improvement of the language. It is known that learning another language means learning another culture, traditions and gestures. Therefore, another approach is being used in different teaching and learning contexts. Most importantly, teachers involved in teaching languages should find different ways to offer students variety and increase their motivation in the EFL classroom. In the last century, in particular the last three decades, teaching methods have changed constantly in order to help learners acquire the desired knowledge, by having fun, too. The main emphasis was put in developing student communication skills. Nowadays, there are many different ways of teaching EFL and in particular, technology, which has enabled us to use numerous ways of teaching and learning a foreign language. Textbooks that are used to teach another language are full of pictures and animations which help learners to have an image while being taught. Besides, pictures and conversations, the textbooks used in EFL classes are equipped with recorded tapes of conversations and songs recorded by native speakers in order to help learners' with their pronunciation. The participants of the study are students from a private Language School 'Oxford Studio' in Gjilan. Their answers show that they seem to enjoy watching videos in the classroom, and are motivated to discuss them afterwards with their teacher.

Keywords: Second language acquisitions; technology; videos; teaching techniques; private school.

1. Introduction

Learning a second language requires a lot of hard work, patience and commitment by EFL learners .

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In order to become a successful learner, students should acknowledge their responsibilities and commitments. However, it is teachers' responsibility to make their classes more attractive and comfortable environments for learners. Classrooms should be well equipped to enable learners to obtain information in different ways and possibilities. With the advancement of technology nowadays, it is much easier to reach any information and organize or practice different activities at the same time. Teachers or educators should lead learners on to the right path in order to make their learning experience more effective. Teachers' roles are constantly changing according to the classroom situations and tasks, and they are using different teaching materials. Since the introduction of the new editions of textbooks which are generally used in our schools, teachers are offered different opportunities to teach and a selection of appropriate materials. One of the selection and opportunity that has been considered to be an innovation is the video playing. There are various conversations related to the textbooks, improvised by native speakers in improvised settings. This is considered by many a very helpful way of teaching for teachers, in general, and an easier way of learning for learners, in particular. The purpose of this research was to investigate how much the videos are used in the EFL classrooms, the impact and their effect on learners' language achievements and improvement. The students who were part of this research are attendees of the classes where we have done the research. They belonged to different age groups and majority of them were from eighteen to thirty five years-old.

The main objectives of the study were:

- To elicit students' opinions on the use of videos in learning EFL,
- To investigate classroom practices where videos are used, and
- To make recommendations for further research.

2. Literature Review

Teaching and learning nowadays have become easier and more attractive for the students than ever before thanks to the development of modern technology. Teaching a foreign language does not necessarily reveal the notion that teaching and learning should follow only what the textbooks offer but teachers should bring different resources into the classroom. Inside the classroom teachers use laptops and projectors to play videos to their students. Therefore, technology, especially since the emergence of the Internet, has affected every aspect of education, and is changing the way we teach and learn constantly. "(Chuo and Kung, 2002, as cited in Kelsen 2009, p.8). Additionally, Rammel (2005, para.2) stated that: Video has been proven to be an effective method in teaching English as a foreign/second language (EFL/ESL) for both young and adult learners. Video can be used in a variety of instructional settings - in classrooms, on distance-learning sites where information is broadcast to learners who interact with facilitator via video or computer, and in self-study and evaluation situations. It can also be used in the teacher's personal and professional development or with students as a way of presenting content, initiating conversations, and providing illustrations for various concepts. Teachers and students can always create their own video tapes as teaching or learning content for the class or as a mean to assess learners' performance. Videos are used for contextualizing the language (i.e., linking language form to meaning) and depicting the foreign culture more effectively than with the help of other instructional materials. Video tapes allow students to hear native speakers interacting in everyday conversational situations and to practice important

linguistic structures. In addition, "Unlike audiocassettes, video's visual dimension is thought to reduce ambiguities present in native speaker voices and to motivate students to want to learn the foreign language" (Herron and his colleagues 1995, p. 775). Therefore, this is a way teachers can familiarize their students with the use of English. They also learn how the words and phrases are used in specific situations. This is one way of making them sound more fluent. (Xhemaili, 2013, p.11). What is more important, videos provide interesting and motivating clues which accompany audio or written inputs, therefore it supports comprehension and production of foreign language input/output (Hanley and his colleagues 1995; Herron and his colleagues 1995; Wen, 1989; Weyers, 1999). "This means that it makes learners' brain elastic to English language, makes it feel the language easier while seeing peoples' movements and reactions toward different situations. "(Ismaili, 2013, p.17). Learners find them really attractive because they can see people's movements and facial expressions while using the target language. Furthermore, movies provide language learners with the opportunity to view the social dynamics of communication as native speakers interact in authentic settings. The above interactions help learners get the idea of the real language usage while they watch different situations in films and other videos played in the classroom. Lansford (2014) believes that another important factor for teachers that makes it more interesting and enjoyable is that it helps to promote comprehension. According to Çakir,(2006, p.68) "Videos, sounds, films, recordings and other stuff are really helpful. They can watch videos and then comment them, they can listen to different conversations or stories and then teacher can lead discussion by separating learners into groups". Similarly, Katchen (2002, p.2) believes that "Most often it is used either to present students with spoken language input for listening practice or to elicit student language output via speaking or writing. Videos may also illustrate cultural and nonverbal behavior and can also be used for teaching a variety of content (e.g., "about" linguistics) and skills (e.g., media literacy, literary criticism, comparing book and film versions)."

3. Research Methodology

The present study investigates the impact of videos used in the EFL classrooms. This research took place at the Language School - Oxford Studio in Gjilan. The particular research techniques used in this study were students' questionnaire and classroom observations.

4. Research questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What were students' perceptions of the use of videos in the classroom?
2. What are the effects of videos on students' language proficiency and motivation to learn?
3. How often do teachers use videos in the classroom?

5. Participants

There were three groups of students, in total 40, who were attending the English courses at the Pre-Intermediate. They were using the same set of textbooks. We observed 4 classes each of them containing 10-14 students.

There were also 4 teachers participating in the research.

6. Instruments

For the purpose of this research, the study used students' questionnaire and classroom observations. The questionnaire had ten questions which were translated into Albanian with the purpose of understanding the questions better and so we could obtain more reliable research results. Also, there were 4 classroom observations conducted and the classroom teachers were informed in advance before we observed their classroom.

7. Study results

7.1. Student's questionnaire results

Table 1: Students' questionnaire results

ITEMS	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1. Books that we use (Cutting Edge pre-intermediate) are adequate and comprehensible.	36 90%	4 10%	0	0	40 100%
2. They belong to my level of English.	24 60%	16 40%	0	0	40 100%
3. The Cutting Edge set of textbooks offer enough videos.	32 80%	8 20%	0	0	40 100%
4. Videos are all related to the lesson we are going through.	36 90%	4 10%	0	0	40 100%
5. I find videos attractive and helpful for me.	32 80%	8 20%	0	0	40 100%
6. Videos help us directly in better communication with one another.	16 40%	24 60%	0	0	40 100%
7. I sometimes don't understand the video then I ask my teacher to reply it.	8 20%	8 20%	8 20%	16 80%	40 100%
8. When video finishes, teacher asks us to make similar conversation and situations in the classroom.	36 90%	4 10%	0	0	40 100%
9. Teacher provides us with extra videos, despite those that book recommends.	4 10%	20 50%	8 20%	8 20%	40 100%
10. I don't consider videos helpful for me.	4 10%	0	20 50%	16 40%	40 100%

The questionnaire presents the results of the students' responses that used the set of books on which we have conducted the research. They were separated into three groups because as we know in private courses the

number of students in one group is not big. They showed their approach toward the questions related to the classroom, textbooks, videos and their participation in the classroom. The results of the questionnaire are presented in Table 1.

Results related to first question about books that we use (Cutting Edge pre-intermediate) if they are adequate and comprehensible. Almost all of the learners, 90% strongly agreed that these books were adequate for their level and comprehensible compare to 10 % of students who only agreed that these books were proper for their level of English. However, the majority of them strongly agreed. Results related to the second question about if books belonged to their level of English. Almost two third or 60% of students strongly agreed that textbooks used are appropriate for their level compare to 40 % agreed on item two. Results related to the third question about whether The Cutting Edge set of textbooks offer enough videos. More than two third of students or 80% said strongly agreed that they are attractive and very interesting videos. Despite this there were students who didn't think that the videos play in the classroom were enough and only agreed that they are interesting and attractive, the percentage of those students is 20%. Results related to the question number four about whether videos are related to the lesson they were learning or not. This question showed very positive results, as 90% of learners said that they strongly agree that videos were all related to the lesson, but only 10 % of students were unsure. Furthermore, results related to the fifth question about whether they find videos attractive and helpful. Only 20% of the students said that they agree compare to 80% of students strongly agreed that in the classrooms of their school there is enough communication of English language. Results related to the sixth question about if videos help them directly to better communication with one another. Almost two third or 60% of students agreed compare to 40 % who strongly agreed on this question. However, the seventh question shows different results; the question was about if Videos help them directly in better communication with one another or not. Just above one third or 40% of students strongly disagreed compare to 20% who strongly agreed followed by 20% who disagreed, and another 20% of students who agreed. Results related to the eighth question about if their teachers practice similar conversations and situations in the classroom after the videos are finished. Almost all students or 90% of them strongly agreed that when video finishes their teacher asks them to make similar conversation and situations in the classroom. However, there are 10 % of students who were not sure about it and circled only agree. In addition, results related to the ninth question about if teacher provide learners with extra videos besides those that book recommends. In this question we had diverse thoughts from our students. A small number or 10% of students strongly agreed compare to 50% of them who agreed, followed by 20% of students who disagreed, and 20% strongly disagreed. The final question brings another diversity of answers. The question was about students' feelings, if they don't consider videos helpful for them. Even in this question we got different answers, too. The majority of students disagreed compare to 40% of them who strongly disagreed, and only 10% of them agreed that they don't consider videos to be helpful for their improvement of the language.

7.2. Observation results

The second instrument used to gather data in the study was classroom observation. We observed a group of students who were using the same set of textbooks that we were using. Almost all the students belonged to the same level apart from few exceptions. Generally we had a good time together and learners felt confident to

participate and express their ideas. We used an observation protocol to help us identify all the main points of the classes. Table 2 The observation results:

Table 2: Observation results

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL	
Students' Observation Protocol	
Oxford Studio/1 – Gjilan	
Group: Cutting Edge	
Level: pre-intermediate	
Duration of classes: three times per week/100 min.	
Observation lasted during the whole level	
Item	Results
Was students' level the same?	Most of the students belonged to the same level but there were some exceptions with students who started the course later than the other.
Could learners understand instructions given by their teacher in English?	Learners were able to understand all the instructions given by teacher in the classroom.
Were learners excited whenever there was supposed a video to be played.	The majority of learners were very interested during the videos; it was their first level with that possibility. They seemed to be very interested compare to some that weren't excited and impressed by them.
Did the videos introduce new vocabulary regularly?	The videos kept using the new vocabulary which was introduced firstly in the book then it was reinforced in short videos.
Did teachers require learners to act and use the same vocabulary that was used in the videos?	Each word that was introduced to learners was used in the exercises that were followed by a short video and then teachers always asked learners to repeat the same.
Were videos and recordings that the text books provided interesting to learners?	They seem to be very interesting to learners but sometimes they had difficulties with some new vocabulary they didn't understand and learners needed teacher's help.
Was the teacher communicating in English language during the classes?	Teachers insisted in using English language all the time in the classroom.
What was teacher's approach toward videos, did teacher bring extra videos during classes?	Teacher always played the videos when books required to, but no extra videos were brought to the classroom. Pretending that "books have their own well thought videos and there's no need for more".
Were videos helpful in improving students' pronunciation and stress?	Videos seemed to be very helpful because we could see learners' interest by listening them carefully and repeating them in order to pronounce each word correctly.
Did videos that were played in the classroom, have subtitles in English language?	Videos had no subtitles but they were a visualized part of the conversations introduced first in the book. So, no subtitles were showed in the desktop but students had them in their books.

It was observed that EFL learners communicated in English language in the classroom and they enjoyed watching videos. They also seemed very interested and motivated while the teacher played the videos selected. They didn't have many difficulties exercising the same conversations and situations showed in the videos when the teacher asked them to do so. Learners themselves expressed their opinion that they had another feeling of the language or felt differently with the use of videos. They also said that they could see the facial expressions of people in the video, gestures and their mimics that would help them when they were required to repeat the same

conversations as in the videos. Even though they sometimes made mistakes while communicating in the target language and teacher corrected them gently without pressuring them. Even teachers used proper methods of teaching and used the textbooks that gave precise explanation on how to teach and how to do each exercise.

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that learning English as a Foreign Language is a long process that requires practice, patience and willingness from the learners. It is recommended that in order to teach and have successful classes teachers should use different tools such as videos, power point presentations, tapes, etc. The participants seemed that the Cutting Edge set of textbooks offer enough videos exercises related to classroom topics and learners enjoy their discussions with the teacher afterwards. However, there are few cases where students have difficulties understanding the video completely and they require teachers' help. Regarding the first research question, "What are students' perceptions of the use of videos in the classroom?", students seemed to be very interested in the videos played in the classroom by the teacher. They all watched them carefully and each video was replayed two or three time in order for students to have the opportunity to watch and realize the gestures and the intonation from the native speakers. This is considered to be as very important because it helped learners in pronouncing the new vocabulary properly, and putting the stress in the right syllable; they were also very quiet and listened carefully to each word that was being used and pronounced. So, they seemed to be very interested in the videos played and considered them as a fun part of their learning process. With regard to the second question, "What are the effects of videos on students' language proficiency and motivation to learn?", according to our observation, we can say that playing videos in the classroom resulted to be very helpful. The reason we suggest this is because the teachers used to play the videos two or three times, so learners had enough time to analyze almost everything what was said during the video presentation. Afterwards, they always discussed about the video and then asked students to repeat or exercise the same conversations in the classroom. The rehearsals after the videos being played were important parts of the learning process because the teacher could realize whether they understood the new vocabulary, if they are using it properly, if their intonation is correct, and if they are putting the stress in the right syllable in each new word that they were introduced and so on. That was a good opportunity for teachers to correct them and help them if there was a need. However, some of the confident students could realize their own mistakes and correct themselves afterwards. The third and the last question of our research related to "How often do teachers use videos in the classroom?", generally, teachers used textbook videos frequently and there was no need for them to bring extra videos in the classroom. Occasionally teachers brought some videos in the classroom related to the grammatical parts of the book, but they didn't seem to be very interesting and fun for the learners. They were not very helpful since teachers had to explain several times the same exercises by themselves.

9. Recommendation

The study recommends that future studies should focus on other technology tools which can enhance learning process. In our case we observed only one class but in future studies we recommend to researchers to observe more classes and teachers that will enable them and offer the opportunity to see things from different perspectives. Another important issue to be considered by future studies is that instead of using teacher's

questionnaire they may use interviews which could produce other results and provide different answers. Above all, it is strongly recommended for EFL teachers to focus their attention on the videos impact in developing student communication. Even EFL students felt comfortable and differently while watching videos in the classroom. Other studies could use questionnaires which contain more questions related to videos presented in the classroom so that they could provide more worthy answers. Lastly, by only changing the way we approached this case, others may receive additional input to use in their studies. Teaching is a long and complex process. Nevertheless, teachers should always try to use different tools to enhance the learning process and videos can help the process along the way.

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